

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 15-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 12-14 are canceled.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendments merely cancel rejected claims); (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 1-10 and 15-24 are in condition for allowance. To this end, Applicants have canceled rejected claims 12-14. Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for allowance.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by JP 11-071184 ("JP '184"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants point out that claims 12-14 are canceled. Therefore, Applicants submit that this rejection is now moot.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are thus respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-10 and 15-24 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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